



OFFICE OF THE NATIONAL COMMANDER
NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS
CIVIL AIR PATROL
UNITED STATES AIR FORCE AUXILIARY
MAXWELL AIR FORCE BASE, ALABAMA 36112-6332

16 February 2008

MEMORANDUM FOR ALL CAP COMMANDERS

FROM: CAP/CC

SUBJECT: CAP Camper Trailer Safety Precautions, Interim Change Letter to CAPR 77-1

1. Recently there have been some reports in the media of the possible presence of formaldehyde in hurricane relief camper trailers acquired from the Federal Emergency Management Agency. As a precaution to address this concern and to increase the safety of our volunteer members, immediately post the attached warning inside each camper trailer and then comply with its instructions unless prevented by circumstances.
2. Overnight stays in the trailers are prohibited. CAP trailers may only be utilized as meeting spaces and temporary incident response facilities.
3. Anyone experiencing symptoms of formaldehyde exposure (i.e., eye, nose or throat irritation, headache, nausea and a variety of asthma-like symptoms including shortness of breath) in one of these trailers should not be expected to enter any trailers during the performance of their duties.
4. Wings who no longer require the use of one of these trailers should notify Mr. K.C. Jones, CAP NHQ/LGS, at kjones@cap.gov to request turn in instructions.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Amy S. Courter".

Amy Courter
Brigadier General, CAP
Interim National Commander

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Important Health Notice

IMPORTANT HEALTH NOTICE

Some of the building materials in this camper or mobile home may emit formaldehyde gas. Eye, nose, and throat irritation, headache, nausea, and a variety of asthma-like symptoms, including shortness of breath, have been reported as a result of formaldehyde exposure. Elderly persons and young children, as well as anyone with a history of asthma, allergies, or lung problems, may be at greater risk. Persons experiencing symptoms of formaldehyde exposure should exit the trailer immediately and seek the assistance of medical personnel.

Although reduced ventilation, high temperatures, and high humidity can all raise formaldehyde levels the following steps should be followed prior to use of this trailer:

1. After periods of storage or non-use, open the windows and doors of the unit and use fans to force stale air out and bring fresh air in, for a minimum of four (4) days. Open cabinet doors, drawers, closets, etc to maximize exposure of all potential formaldehyde emitting surfaces to fresh air.
2. During use, maintain increased ventilation throughout the trailer.
 - Open windows and doors of the unit and continue to use fans to force stale air out and bring fresh air in.
 - Keep indoor temperatures cool through the use of an air conditioner. Heat causes increased out-gassing of formaldehyde.
 - Keep humidity low by use of a dehumidifier. Humidity causes formaldehyde to release more fumes. Relative humidity of about 40%-50% is considered optimum.
 - Do not smoke inside this trailer. Tobacco smoking releases additional formaldehyde and other toxic chemicals.
 - Frequently wash or clean textiles such as curtains and carpeting.
3. As an additional precaution encapsulating potential formaldehyde emitting materials may be considered. Sealing unfinished particleboard and plywood surfaces with water-based polyurethane may help to reduce exposures for ultra-sensitive individuals
4. Overnight stays are prohibited.

Additional information on formaldehyde can be obtained via the internet at:

<http://www.fema.gov/news/newsrelease.fema?id=36010>